

OBSERVATIONS
RESPECTING THE
CIRCAR
OF
MAZULIPATAM,
IN A
LETTER
FROM *Sullivan (Att-Geny)*
JOHN SULLIVAN, ESQUIRE,
TO THE
COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXX.

ORDER OF THE

SECRETARY

CLERK

MAINTENANCE

EDWARD

1880

JOHN

THE



COURT OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

EAST-INDIA COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1880

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SIR GEORGE WOMBWELL, BARONET,
CHAIRMAN,

AND

SIR WILLIAM JAMES, BARONET,
DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN,

Of the COURT of DIRECTORS of the
EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

GENTLEMEN,

THE letter which I have the honour to send you with this, addressed to the Court of Directors, is of so great a length, that I should fear to ask your countenance of it; if I were not persuaded, that every attempt, however feeble, to promote the interest of the Company, and to increase the welfare of the people living under their protection, would be sure to find advocates in those, who are so particularly intrusted in the management of their affairs.

IN this persuasion, I can know no other anxiety, than what proceeds from the consciousness of my own inability to do justice to a subject, which, in abler hands, could not fail to carry conviction. But even here I am taught a confidence, from the known indulgence of the Court of Directors; and from the

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conviction, that if I should but succeed to engage their attention to the important points suggested in this letter, the consequences cannot but be favourable to the public interest, and to the Natives of India, whose situation so much claims the indulgent care of the Company.

It was my intention to have followed these subjects, by an endeavour to have shewn how much the peculiar situation of the Gentlemen in the service of the Company abroad calls for your consideration; and to have submitted to you a proposal for relieving them from the necessity, which, for some years past, has compelled them to make their remittances through foreigners; and by that means has caused not only a part of the wealth, which should be brought directly to this country, to be directed into other channels; but has enabled foreigners to carry on a commerce with India, under circumstances which have already occasioned the manufactures to be debased, and under advantages which cannot fail in time to affect the sales of the Company; but a very impaired state of health having obliged me to forbid myself, for the present, the application which these subjects would require, I will not intrude further on your time, than to assure you of the respect with which

I have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient humble servant,

George-Street, Hanover-Square, 3d Feb. 1779.

JOHN SULLIVAN.

TO THE HONOURABLE
THE COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

GENTLEMEN,

THE great political arrangements of India, from their variety and extent, have unavoidably engaged so much of your attention, that it cannot be imagined the subordinate departments, which called not immediately for your aid, should have been enquired into with that regard they would otherwise have received from you.

FROM the same reasons it must have happened, that, in some instances, even the Governments abroad have been obliged to forbid themselves too minute an enquiry, lest the time given to investigation should have drawn their attention too much from the more important concerns committed to their charge.

UNDER these circumstances, it may be permitted to hope, that every endeavour to convey information will be favourably received by you; and though the importance of the subject, which this Letter is designed to treat of, makes me extremely diffident of my own ability; yet having resided many years at Mazulipatam, with some advantages of information, and having given a very early application to the business of that department, I hope I may be excused the liberty of submitting to you some observations on the situation of your affairs there.

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To assist my endeavours, I will presume so much upon your indulgence, as to divide the subject under the following heads.

FIRST—An attempt to explain the nature of landed tenures under the Gentoo government; and to describe the securities, which were provided by their institutions, in favour of industry and cultivation.

SECONDLY—An endeavour to shew the influence, which the conquest of the Mahomedans had upon these tenures.

THIRDLY—An enquiry into the introduction and establishment of Zemindars in these provinces; and an explanation of the causes, which raised them to the degree of power and consideration they were found in possession of, when the government of the Company came to be established.

FOURTHLY—A view of their present situation, and of its influence upon the revenue, and on the industry of the country.

AND LASTLY—An explanation of such measures, as, it may be hoped, would tend to increase the one, and to extend the other.

It could but little serve the object of this enquiry, to attempt an investigation of the origin and establishment of the Gentoo nation in India; or to examine under what form the distribution of lands was first made amongst a people, whose antiquity seems to have eluded the enquiry of the earliest writers, and whose improvements in arts and manufactures excited the admiration and wonder of those who first visited their country.

LEAVING therefore this research to those, who have more ability and better opportunities for following it, the design of this Letter will be

be sufficiently answered, if a satisfactory account can be given of the general tenure under which landed property was held at an improved period of the Gentoo government, when the progress of science had established regulations, the forms of which still continue in use.

For this purpose, it may be sufficient to observe, that however the general property of the country might have been disposed of, or under whatever form of government it might have been ruled by the ancient Rajahs, the subdivisions of the land were made with all the security and encouragement which industry could require. For, by an express law of the Gentoos, it was declared, that the cultivation of the soil conveyed a right to the husbandman, who first brought it into improvement, of being continued in the management of it; and directed that his industry should be rewarded by certain shares in the produce, which, where no private agreement determined otherwise, were regulated to be, in improved ground, or grounds which had not been uncultivated more than two years, five-sixths of the crop; in grounds which had been uncultivated for three or four years, seven-eighths of the crop; and in grounds which had been waste for five years, nine-tenths.—But lest this extraordinary encouragement, for improving waste grounds, should induce the husbandmen to extend their views beyond their ability, or tempt them to neglect the cultivation of such lands as had been first intrusted to their industry, it was provided by the same law, that the husbandmen who should neglect to cultivate such lands, should be bound to give to the proprietor the amount of one-sixth part of the crop which should be produced upon other grounds of the same quality and extent, and to pay a fine of the same value to the government.

As a means of obtaining the most authentic information upon a subject of such importance, and of enabling the government to judge of the abilities of the husbandmen, a public officer was established in every village,

village, whose duty it was to form an exact register of the quantity of ground held by each husbandman, the part of this which was cultivated, and the number of working cattle he was possessed of; the produce of each man's industry became afterwards an article in this register; and the proportion he received of the crop, with the price of the market at the time, concluded the account.

THE accounts of each village, taken in this detail, were transmitted to other officers, charged with similar duties in the subdivisions of the provinces; who formed from them abstracts of the state of cultivation, the produce and capacity of their several divisions. These abstracts were again reduced, by the provincial registers, to a still more general scale; so that a particular state of the industry and cultivation in each province was constantly exposed to the eye of government.

BESIDES the advantages of this particular information, a further security was established in favour of industry, by the policy of the Gentoo institutions; which connecting the interest of these officers of the revenue with the improvement of the lands, regulated their salaries by a commission upon the whole produce of the soil in their respective departments; and to encourage them to a faithful discharge of their duties, their offices were made hereditary; and by that means a tie seemed established, too powerful to be affected by any temporary advantages, either of oppression or indulgence.

BUT lest this should not be a sufficient check upon their conduct, a further controul was instituted in every village, by the association of the husbandmen; who, jealous of their rights, united for their common security; and to make their union the more effectual, named certain persons from amongst themselves, who, under the character of headmen
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of the village, were charged with the care of the common interests, and employed in transacting all the business of the society with the deputies of the government.

AND finally ;—as every regulation for the security of property would have been imperfect, where the property itself remained in any respect undefined ; it was provided by the Gentoo institutions, that where particular agreements were made to supersede the established regulations with respect to the shares of the crop, such agreements should be executed in writing before the tillage was commenced ; specifying the exact terms of the contract, and determining, in the most unquestionable manner, the extent of the husbandman's rights, before he yoked his oxen to the plough.

SUCH were the securities and encouragement held out by the Gentoos in favour of industry, under the protection of institutions, which seemed particularly formed for their advantage ; the husbandmen exerted every ability for the improvement of their lands, and, by the simplest operation, obtained, through their industry, a right of property in the soil, which descended to their heirs, upon the easiest and most equitable condition ; for it required only a continuation of that industry which first established their claim, and, by the exertion of which, the particular interests of the family could not fail to be extended.

SUBJECT to this general tenure were all the lands of Hindostan, held under the government of the Gentoos ; and though, in the course of time, property must have suffered many changes, purchase and sale having been permitted, under certain restrictions ; yet, whether the husbandman grew into the absolute proprietor of the soil, or the labourer into a husbandman ; the general system felt no alteration, the country continued

continued to flourish, and those riches came to be heaped up, which the Mahomedans afterwards plundered and dispersed.

THE violence which marked the first invasions of these conquerors, and the persecuting spirit which, for a time, followed them in their depredations, must, while they prevailed, have shaken every kind of security. But as soon as the establishment of their authority made them feel a property in the country, their policy discovered to them the advantages of a system, which, besides conveying particular information with regard to the value and capacity of the lands, established checks in every department of the revenue; and the Mahomedans are accordingly found, in a great measure, to have adopted the regulations of the Gentoos, in the administration of the revenue.

For though, instead of the moderate demands of that government, the claims of the emperor were raised, in the year of Christ 1300, to one half of the annual produce of the lands; yet the protection which was at the same time extended to the husbandmen, by the appointment of officers to restrain the collectors from exacting more than the established rates, and the care which was taken, on the other hand, to prevent the husbandmen from undertaking to cultivate more ground than they had the ability to improve, afford arguments in point, not only of an attention to the ancient usages of the Gentoos, but of the continuance of those registers, which have been before described as constituting the basis of their system; for without ascertaining the particular stock of every husbandman, and the number of servants employed by him, it would have been impossible to have determined to what extent they might engage in cultivation; and without the assistance of these registers, in which every particular was already inserted, this information could not have been obtained.

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In the year 1346, these regulations having been found insufficient, an Inspector-General was appointed, for every-thing that related to husbandry, under the denomination of Amir Kohi; who divided the country into districts of sixty miles square, under a Strickdar, who was to be answerable for it's cultivation and improvement; and it is said, that above one hundred strickdars received their appointments at once, and were furnished from the Treasury with seventy lacks of rupees, to enable them to encourage and assist the industrious husbandmen.

BUT the instability of the Mahomedan government, the frequent revolutions which happened in the empire, and the rebellions which were perpetually breaking out in the provinces, rendering it impossible to accomplish the establishment of any general system, and making it necessary to adopt some mode, by which a certainty might be established in the resources of government, the custom of farming out the revenues of the provinces to the Omrahs, who were appointed to govern them, which had already obtained in some places, was extended over the greatest part of the empire.—And as these governors had, for the most part, the power of administering and collecting the revenue at discretion, the modes of collection, and the powers and denominations of the several officers employed in it, differed with local circumstances, and the ideas of the governors for the time.—And this may account for the different descriptions of officers, which are to be met with in the public acts of the Mahomedan government, and for the different duties which officers of the same denominations are found to be charged with in different provinces.

WITHOUT therefore attempting further to follow the general regulations of the empire, or endeavouring to explain the duties of the

several officers who were employed in the administration of the revenue throughout that extensive country, which would necessarily create confusion; it will be sufficient here to confine the enquiry to what happened in the provinces now subject to the Company, and dependent on Mazulipatam.

THESE provinces compose a part of that division of the peninsula of India, which is known by the name of Golcondah, and which was probably formerly comprized in the country of Telingana; as the people are still frequently distinguished by the denomination of Telingas; and their language called the language of Telinga, in contradistinction to that of Malabar, which prevails on the coast of Coromandel, from Cape Comorin to Pulicat; when, after crossing a small river, a different language and national character, with a different currency of money, are to be met with, and are found to prevail as far as the northern branch of the river Guadavery, which nearly bounds these provinces on the north.

THE first invasion of Telingana by the Mahomedans, appears to have been in the year of Christ 1303; when it was prosecuted with so much vigour, that in less than three years the country was reduced to a tributary dependence on the emperor of Delhi; under which it continued, with some short interruptions, until the year 1344; when the Rajahs of the Carnatick and Telingana having confederated together, they drove the Mahomedans back into the northern parts of the Deckan; an advantage which they were soon afterwards enabled to maintain, by the revolt of the Siddee officers in the service of the empire. For the jealousy of the emperor, who was himself a Patan, and of a different sect from the Siddees, having induced him to proscribe these officers, they were forced into rebellion; and those in the Deckan having surprized Dowlatabad, they easily seized upon all the possessions of the empire

empire in the neighbourhood ; and being situated between Telingana and the dominions of the emperor, they served as a barrier to the Gentoos, who probably supported them in their rebellion ; and by this means a political connexion came to be established between them, which enabled the Siddees to assert and maintain their independence, and left the Gentoo princes at liberty to govern their countries in peace.

If the information, which an intelligent traveller received in India above a century ago, may be credited, the Rajahs continued to maintain their independence, and to govern almost all the higher peninsula, until the year 1467 ; when having imprudently intrusted the government of extensive countries to the Mahomedan officers in their service ; or, more probably, having suffered their Mahomedan neighbours to become too powerful ; whole provinces were wrested from them ; and, amongst others, that of Golcondah ; shortly after which, the government of the Gentoos is said to have been confined to the south of the river Kistnah.

How soon after this event the Mahomedans penetrated to Mazulipatam, and reduced the coast of Golcondah, is not well ascertained ; though it must have taken place before the year 1565 ; for the united forces of the Mahomedan princes of the Deckan are said, in that year, to have been employed on an expedition against the Gentoos to the south of the river Kistnah, whose country they plundered and laid waste : and this opinion appears the better founded, as the revenue of the country in the neighbourhood of Mazulipatam, was administered under the Mahomedan authority in the year 1596, when the ancestor of the present Zemindar of Muglatores rented some villages in one of the districts which now compose that Zemindary.

THIS imperfect sketch of the progress of the Mahomedans in the Deckan, until they extended their government over the countries now subject to the Company, has been attempted, with a view of connecting the subject of this Letter, and of fixing the æra when the history of these provinces becomes particularly interesting to the Company. And the year 1596 will not be thought improperly chosen for this purpose, when it is known, that the establishment of all the Zemindars in these provinces, is to be deduced from the custom, which then first took place in the family of Muglatore, of farming, at a stipulated rent, the government's interest in the produce of the lands.

IF a judgment may be formed of the motives which gave rise to this custom, from the particular situation of the Deckan government at that time, it would seem to have been adopted with a view of establishing a greater certainty in their resources, by relieving the revenue from a precarious dependence on the seasons, and of providing against the invasion with which the emperor Akbar then threatened their countries.—For it appears gradually to have extended itself with the progress of the imperial arms, which were soon afterwards carried into the Deckan; until at length the weakness of the government discovering itself on every side, it became necessary to enlarge the powers of the renters; and commissions were accordingly granted, constituting them Zemindars; and, by that appointment, investing them with judicial authority over the lands they held at rent.

THE earliest instance of this kind appears to have happened in the year 1624, when the ancestor of the Muglatore family, who has been seen in 1594 renting a few villages, was constituted Zemindar of three entire districts.

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SIMILAR appointments soon after this took place in favour of other renters; and in the year 1687, when Aurungzebe, after having finally reduced the Deckan princes, had annexed their countries to the dominions of the empire, the greatest part of these provinces was found to be held under Zemindary Saneds; which were then confirmed by the conqueror, and afterwards extended; so that, at his demise, in the year 1707, the whole country was possessed by the ancestors of the present Zemindars.

FROM this time, the confusion which prevailed in every part of the empire, encouraged the Zemindars in these distant provinces to relax in their obedience; in which they were supported by the disputed title to the government of the Deckan; where Nizam-ul-Muluck, maintaining himself in opposition to the orders of the Mogul, excited them to disregard an authority, which possessed not the means of enforcing their submission.

AND though, in the year 1722, some of the more powerful of them were nearly reduced by the Soubah of the Golcondah division of the Deckan, who opposed the pretensions of Nizam-ul-Muluck; yet the approach of the Nizam obliging him to turn his arms to the defence of his own government, they were again left at liberty to strengthen themselves; and the situation of affairs favouring their views, they soon affected the state and independence of the ancient Rajahs.

BUT the success of Nizam-ul-Muluck having, in the year 1725, effectually established his authority over all the Soubaships of the Deckan; and the assistance of the Zemindars being no longer necessary to his ambition; his policy would not suffer a power, which might become formidable, to establish itself in his dominions; and therefore finding

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an excuse in his ambition, and possibly justified by the conduct of the Zemindars, he marched an army into these provinces, and, after a long siege, reduced the fort of Noozeed, which was built in the year 1700 by the Zemindar of that country, whom he now displaced, and deprived of his Zemindary Saneds; he afterwards entered the country of Muglatore, which he also took possession of, and then returned to Hydrabad.

BUT these were rather temporary advantages, than the reduction of the Zemindars; for Nizam-ul-Muluck was scarcely returned to his capital, when the adherents of the families of Noozeed and Muglatore, secretly assisted by the other Zemindars, appeared in arms, plundering and laying waste the country; and though, in the year 1729, they were forced to yield to the superior power of the Nizam's arms, and to fly before his deputy, Rustum Jung Khan, who expelled them all from their lands; yet the country remained such a scene of disorder, from their incursions and depredations, that no revenue was drawn from it; until at length the expedient of admitting them in the character of temporary renters was adopted, and they were allowed, in 1737, to farm small parts of the lands they had formerly possessed.

FROM this time, favoured by the intrigues which brought Nadir Shaw into the empire, and by the revolution at Delhi, in which Nizam-ul-Muluck was principally concerned, the Zemindars were again enabled gradually to extend themselves; and though the return of Nadir Shaw into Persia left the Nizam in possession of the emperor, and of all the remaining power of the Mogul government; yet his absence from the Deckan occasioned disturbances in that quarter, which were only to be quelled by his presence and abilities; and which, by afterwards confining his attention to the Carnatick, where these disturbances

bances prevailed, necessarily assisted the views of the Zemindars in these northern provinces; who are found, between the years 1737 and 1743, to have recovered all their former possessions; and to have held them with the permission of Nizam-ul-Muluck, if not under the sanction and authority of his Saneds.

DURING the few remaining years of the Nizam's life, the Zemindars appear to have submitted to the authority of his government; and a short interval of quiet was given to the inhabitants of these provinces. But upon his death, which happened in the year 1749, the whole State having been thrown into confusion, by the disputed succession to the government of the Deckan, they were again encouraged to renew their schemes of independence; and the opportunity of a disputed title authorizing them, under the pretence of attachment, to take up arms, they easily re-established their power, and as easily obtained new Saneds from the prevailing Soubah.

IN this state were the affairs of these provinces, when the French obtained a grant of them, in the year 1753, from the third son of the old Nizam, Salabet Jung, who now ruled the Deckan.

IN the commencement of their administration, some of the Zemindars were made to feel the weight of their power; but this was neither of long duration, nor did their government in general prove unfavourable to the Zemindars.—For the engagements of the French having obliged them to lead their troops into the different parts of the Deckan, where the Soubah's government needed their support, before their own authority was well established in these provinces, the collection of the revenue, upon which the payment of the army depended, became the first object of their government, and necessarily engaged them in a temporizing system.

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THE capture of Mazulipatam, which surrendered to the English arms in 1759, having deprived the French of all influence in those countries; and the situation of the Company's affairs having made it prudent to reconcile the Soubah to their success; these provinces were then suffered to return under his government.

It would be a tedious detail of opposition and disputed power, to follow the Soubah's deputies in the management of those provinces, and in their ineffectual attempts to controul the Zemindars; nor would the subject be at all elucidated, by enlarging upon the different negotiations which were opened, after the fall of Pondicherry, with the present Soubah, Nizam Ally Khan, the fourth son of Nizam-ul-Muluck, for obtaining a grant of those provinces to the Company.

It may be sufficient therefore to observe, that the Zemindars paying little regard to the authority of the Soubah, dissipated the revenues in quarrels amongst themselves; and that a general confusion prevailed throughout the country, 'till the Phirmaunds of the Mogul conveyed the sovereignty of these provinces to the Company in the year 1766.

THE Soubah, who had flattered himself that the Company would at length be induced to accept these provinces from him, upon the condition of granting him a military assistance for the general support of his government, as the French had done to his brother, and who, in this hope, had but a few months before refused a very considerable annual tribute, received the news of this event with indignation and disappointment; and immediately made preparations to dispute the authority of a grant, the authenticity of which he affected to deny.

BUT the appearance of a formidable army having soon opened the way to a negotiation, the treaty of Hyderabad was concluded toward
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the end of the year 1766, by which all pretension to these provinces was relinquished by the Soubah, and the authority of the Company became admitted without further opposition.

As there was reason to suppose, that the first arrangements with the Zemindars, for the tribute of their lands, would be attended with difficulty; and as the agents of the Company were unacquainted with the language of the country, and but imperfectly informed in the usages of the people, it was judged expedient to administer the government for a time in the manner which had been found established.

For this purpose, all the authority of the Company was delegated to Hufsein Ally Khan; who, in the character of their deputy, and supported by their power, proceeded through the provinces, making such agreements as he could with the Zemindars; but under an engagement to the Company, of paying annually into their treasury the sum of Madras Pagodas 316,666, including the charges of the troops employed in his support.

In this manner was the government of these provinces administered, till the end of the year 1769; when it being thought that the servants of the Company were qualified to undertake the management of the country themselves, it was determined to abolish the use of intermediate agents, and to settle with each Zemindar for the tribute of his lands. A resolution which was immediately rewarded, by an increase in the revenue from Madras Pagodas 316,666 to Madras Pagodas 491,941; at which rate the Zemindars continued to pay until the year 1773, when a small increase was made upon the renewal of the leases, though not to take place till 1776.

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HAVING now followed the Zemindars through all the variety of their fortune ; from the time of their institution, to the period of the English administration ; it will be necessary, before we proceed in their story, to look back to the former institutions of the country ; and to take another view of the particular temper of the government, under which they received their appointment.

It has been seen, in the first part of this Letter, how careful the government of the Gentoos had been, to provide every security and encouragement in favour of industry ; and with what attention the rights of the husbandmen seemed to have been guarded against every kind of violation. It would however be presuming too much to suppose, that injustice and oppression had never invaded these regulations, until the conquest of the Mahomedans had subverted the government, or that the virtues of the Gentoos had yielded only to the miserable necessities of their situation.

THE multiplicity of their penal laws, said to have been enacted long before the name of Mahomed was known, proves, that the vices, common to all extended societies, had made their way amongst them ; and though the peculiar wisdom of their political institutions, blended, as they were, with the principles of their religion, and supported by the authority of the Bramins, prevented any material decline in the industry of the people, while under the government of their Rajahs ; yet whenever the delegated authority of the Mahomedan government has since given them the power, it must be acknowledged, they have been found to exercise it with relentless severity over their brethren ; practising every species of oppression, and discovering uncommon ingenuity in the modes of exaction ; while, on the other hand, the histories of Bengal and the Carnatic furnish two instances of Mahomedan administration, which will cause the government of Sujah Khan in the one,
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and of Sadutullah Khan in the other, to be remembered as *eras*, that may well bear a comparison with the reigns of the most celebrated Rajahs.

POSSIBLY it would be but doing justice to the Mahomedans to suppose, that the same moderation which was exercised for a time in Bengal and the Carnatic, would have been continued in those countries, and even have been extended to every part of their conquests, if the same advantages, of a well-established authority, had enabled them to have directed their attention to the happiness of their subjects; at least this is an acknowledgment which seems due, where the spirit of persecution was made to yield to humanity, and where the usages of the conquered were adopted, in preference to the customs and ideas of the conquerors.

SOME circumstances have been before mentioned, to prove how early this attention to the Gentoo institutions took place; but the accommodating policy of the Mahomedans, seems so peculiarly distinguished in the selection of persons to fill the office of Zemindar, that it would be unpardonable to omit observing here, that although, in the course of time, the whole country of Hindostan was converted into Zemindaries, except those parts which were left in the hands of tributary Rajahs, or the small districts reserved for the particular convenience of government; yet, in all the appointments to this office, there appears to have been but one instance of it's having been conferred on a Mahomedan; and this single exception is accounted for, from the great importance of a pass which lay in the district, and which rendered it rather a military post, than a province of the revenue.

It has been seen, that a Zemindar, besides the superintendance of the revenue, was officially invested with judicial authority within the limits

of his Zemindary ; and of course, that the Gentoos were left, in a great measure, to be governed by those laws, which long establishment had sanctified, and to which they were attached by every moral and religious obligation.

How these laws came to be perverted, and why countries, which the Mahomedans found abounding in every kind of plenty, should, when reduced to their dominion, present the melancholy picture of misery and desolation, even though favoured by the continuance of it's ancient usages, are questions which would require a particular investigation ; though possibly, after the minutest enquiry, no better solution could be given, than what has already appeared in the confusion and disorder of the times ; causes which could hardly fail, in any country, to pervert the wisest regulations into sources of oppression, and to produce those evils so heavily, but so justly complained of in India. It has been seen however, that they were not there beyond remedy ; and the intervals of good government, which were felt in Bengal and the Carnatic, may serve to prove, that possessed of the means to enforce authority, and of abilities to direct the machine of government, everything may still be hoped for in that country.

HAPPILY these means are in the possession of the Company. It has been already seen, with what effect they have been employed in these provinces for increasing the revenue ; it may be added, that the investments have received a like increase ; and that, by restraining the power of the Zemindars, industry has been relieved from those interruptions of war and devastation, to which it was exposed, before the governments of the Company came to be established.

How much further these improvements might be extended, and what measures should be pursued for that purpose, shall be submitted to

to your consideration in the course of this letter. But previous thereto, it will be proper to go back to the subject of the Zemindars; and to explain, how far the internal police of these provinces was found to have been affected, by their conduct during the anarchy and confusion which prevailed in the government, from the death of Nizam-ul-Muluck, 'till the establishment of the Company's authority.

It has been already seen, that a disputed title to the succession, encouraged the Zemindars to seek the means of security in their own resources; and that in a little time their authority, countenanced rather than controuled by those whose cause they had assisted, grew into a power, which enabled them to assume the title and independence of the ancient Rajahs.

For a time a common interest united them, in the support and defence of the advantages they had obtained; and while the little remaining power of the government required any general exertion of their strength, they continued to be in some degree connected by the same principle. But from the time this necessity ceased to exist, the jealousies of uncontrouled power and equal rank, with unequal ability, gave rise to divisions amongst them. The means, which before had been employed to oppose the authority of government, were directed to mutual encroachments; and at length their animosities rose to such a height, that every difficulty was preferred to the acknowledgment of superiority.

THE expenses of these violent contests, which spread desolation on every side, and exposed the unhappy husbandmen to all the misery of arbitrary oppression; the payments which were occasionally made to government, and the necessity of sometimes buying off it's resentment; caused such drains of money from the Zemindars, as could not fail to involve them in heavy debts; and their necessities increasing, while the
uncertainty

uncertainty of payment enhanced the demands of the money-lenders, the whole property of the country soon became subject to the will of their creditors.

THE policy of the Mahomedans, who had long encouraged the agency of money-lenders, for the convenience of speedy payment, and from the advantages which are to be drawn from the influence of a monied interest, where authority is but ill supported, operated with particular force in favour of the Soucars upon this occasion; so that their credit soon came to be the prevailing influence in these provinces: for employed on one side by government with the collection of it's rents from the Zemindars, and on the other side by the Zemindars with their collections from the husbandmen, they grew to be a center of union; without whose agency no part of the great machine could be put in motion, and whose influence was at all times sufficient to govern it's direction.

SUCH was the state of these provinces, when the grant of the Mogul, and the treaty of Hydrabad, subjected them to the dominion of the Company; and though, from that time, a watchful attention to the conduct of the Zemindars, an invariable resolution to repress every attempt in them for terminating their own differences, and an unremitted steadiness in keeping them to the punctual discharge of their rents, have marked the administration of the Company's agents, and effectually reduced the power of the Zemindars; yet the husbandmen still labour under oppression; the Zemindars still feel the weight of accumulating debts; and the Soucars, possessed of all the specie of the country, still continue to enjoy all the influence of their profession.

If the foregoing pages express the ideas it is intended they should convey, they will have shewn, that there is a connexion of interests, so intricately

intricately interwoven in these provinces, that the greatest care will be requisite in forming any plan for improvement.

THE state of landed property, from the simplest, but securest dependence upon industry, is become precarious and uncertain; the Zemindars, from wealth and power, are involved in all the difficulties of debt, without a hope that the embarrassments of government will, as heretofore, enable them to withhold their tribute; and the Soucars, countenanced and supported as formerly, for the convenience of their agency, have now the sanction of the Company for their engagements with the Zemindars, and demands upon their justice for the liquidation of such debts, as have been contracted since the establishment of the English government.

It has been suggested, that the speediest and most effectual way of restoring good order in these provinces, and extending the blessings of freedom and security to the industrious inhabitants, would be, to displace the Zemindars, and return to the system which prevailed under the mild administration of the Gentoos; and in support of this measure, it has been urged, that the revenue of the Company would be increased, by the addition of the sums now received by the Zemindars.

If the Zemindars were still in possession of that power which made them so formidable to the Mahomedans, and if the collection of the revenue depended upon the precarious strength of the government, the policy of this measure, however hazardous, could not be questioned. But as it has been shewn, that the revenue, though increased, is paid with punctuality; that the power of the Zemindars, heretofore so formidable, is reduced to an absolute dependence upon the authority of the Company; and that their engagements with the Soucars, having the sanction of Government, have involved the publick faith; it may be permitted

permitted to doubt, whether the expulsion of the Zemindars might not be productive of consequences more prejudicial to the publick interest, than those abuses are which it is proposed to correct; and whether, instead of bringing an increase of revenue to the treasury, it might not be the means of hazarding, for some years, the loss of that which is now collected.

It surely cannot be supposed, that the influence of the Zemindars, which has had such time to establish, should expire with their power; that the prejudices of long habit and dependence should immediately dissolve; or, that the husbandmen, accustomed as they have been, under the unsteady administration of the Mahomedans, to see Zemindars displaced and restored, without any improvement of their own situation, should at once adopt new ideas; confide in the declarations of government, which all former experience has taught them to distrust; and expose themselves to the hazards of a revolution, the benefits of which they could see but at a distance, and which even then must seem precarious to them; because in the lands conquered from the French, or those ceded by the Nabob, over which the Zemindars have no authority, the condition of the husbandmen has hitherto received no improvement; nor are they sensible of any other change, than that of seeing a temporary renter in possession of that authority, which they had been used to respect in their Zemindars.

It may therefore reasonably be inferred, that until time should imperceptibly wear out the influence of the Zemindars; until their adherents, whether of family, tribe, or attachment, should die away, or be involved in their ruin; no material improvement could take place. On the contrary, it might justly be apprehended, that their followers, as happened in the time of Nizam-ul-Muluck, would infest and disturb the industrious husbandmen, destroying their cattle and their crops;
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and that all the vigilance of government, or the activity of Scapôys, would be insufficient to protect a country of four hundred miles in length, and of difficult access in many parts, from their depredations.

UNDER these disadvantages, which would inevitably involve the current revenue, and render it precarious, the policy of displacing the Zemindars may well be questioned. Probably, upon further enquiry, it will appear, that the real interest of the Company may be found in continuing and supporting them; and in such an event, it will not be unsatisfactory to discover, that there are claims upon their justice in favour of the Zemindars.

WHEN the Phirmaunds of the Mogul, conveying the sovereignty of these provinces to the Company, were first published, circular letters were dispatched to all the Zemindars, inviting them to acknowledge the authority of the English Government; and though some of them, influenced by the intrigues and directions of the Soubah, disregarded the summons, yet the greater number assembled at the place which was appointed for receiving their obedience; and articles were then entered into with them, promising them a confirmation of all their just rights and privileges.

It would be unnecessary now to enter into an explanation of what their rights and privileges were then understood to be, as it is not designed here to establish any claims for the Zemindars, beyond the mere security of their possessions; for though the articles referred to may be thought to convey privileges of more extent, yet when it is considered what infinite advantages are included in the undisturbed possession of property, and that the Zemindars never could have enjoyed this security under the anarchy and confusion of the Mahomedan government, it

will readily be admitted, that the exchange of such adventitious benefits, for so essential a good, would be greatly in their favour.

HITHERTO however, it must be confessed, that this security has not been complete; nor can it be hoped that it will ever be considered so, while the power of making an arbitrary increase in the revenue is reserved by government; for no confidence in its justice and good intentions can be sufficient to dissipate the apprehensions of such a power.

It may indeed be urged, that this custom is justified by the general usage of India; that it was found established in these provinces, when they submitted to the dominion of the Company; and that in the agreements made with the Zemindars in 1769, and those which have been since concluded, it was admitted without opposition. And, so far as the right to exercise this power is concerned, it would certainly seem justified by these authorities. But it is not the right, it is the policy of the measure that is questioned; and this, it is presumed, will not meet with advocates in a country, where the advantages of property are so generally and so well understood.

It may therefore now with some confidence be said, that the measure from which the most extensive influence might be expected in these provinces, and that which would most favourably proclaim the intentions of government, would be, to convert the precarious and discouraging tenure, under which the Zemindars now hold their lands, into one absolute and invariable; ascertaining the increase which should be made upon renewing the leases at stated periods, and the fines which should be exacted upon the accession of an heir.

THE only material objection to this measure, would seem to lie in the difficulty of ascertaining the value of the improvements which might be made between the periods of renewal; but this, it is imagined, will be found of little weight in the present case. For as the registers, which were before-mentioned to have been instituted by the Genoo government, are still regularly taken in every village and district; and as, by means of these, the state of cultivation may at all times be contrasted with the quantity of waste ground belonging to every Zemindar; it would require only to ascertain the first rent, and specify the proportion which, at the expiration of the term of that rent, government should take of the income from the improvements; and this would appear the more easy, as the registers not only mark the quantity of ground cultivated and its produce, but the market-price of such produce at the time of the harvest.

LET it be supposed for instance, that the rents now paid were to be continued for ten years; and that, upon reference at this time to the registers, it should be found one-half part of the improveable land lies waste: let it be supposed further, that upon a like reference at the end of the ten years, it should appear, that one quarter part of such improveable land had been brought under cultivation; and that its produce, upon a medium of the ten years, had yielded such a sum: in such an event, it would not seem difficult, the proportion being fixed and rated by per centage upon this medium, to increase the rent for the next term by the amount of such proportion.

THE spirit of industry so constantly attaches itself to the security of property, that the Zemindars, no longer dependent upon the precarious tenure of preference, but established in their possessions, and sure of sharing largely in the profits of their improvements, would seriously turn their attention to the cultivation of their lands; and filled

with confidence in the justice of government, they would be easily induced to pay attention to such regulations as might be proposed for the general benefit.

BUT before any such regulations could be introduced with success, it would be necessary to adopt some expedient, by which the Zemindars might hope to be freed in time from the heavy load of debt they are involved in; the mere interest of which now keeps them in poverty, and, by restraining their industry, must ever retard the progress of improvement. Without this, all the efforts of government, and every encouragement they could propose, would be insufficient for restraining oppressions; which originating in necessity, must continue while the weight of that necessity is felt.

AN arrangement therefore with the Soucars, for the liquidation of the debts due to them from the Zemindars, seems a measure as necessary to the interest of the Company, as it would be essential to the relief of the Zemindars; but how to effect this, without occasioning distrust in the minds of the Soucars, is a question of equal difficulty and importance: for it can hardly be imagined, that the public credit of the Company in India is supported by that confidence which the national faith procures to it here; nor if it were, would it be prudent to propose that the Company should adopt the expedient of funding; and by taking upon them the debts of the Zemindars, make themselves responsible for the payment.

BUT though it might be too hazardous to propose a measure of this kind, it may not be impossible to qualify the idea; and by substituting the guarantee of the Company instead of their security, and by employing mediation instead of authority, so far to gain the confidence of the

the Soucars, as to engage them to see their own interest in an equitable arrangement.

It has already been observed, that the income of the Zemindars may be ascertained from the registers which are kept in every district. By a similar reference to their leases, their rents may be compared with their receipts; and as their ordinary expenses might be limited, it would seem an easy calculation to judge of their ability for discharging their debts. For instance, suppose a Zemindar, in the receipt of fifty thousand pounds a year, stands charged with a rent of thirty thousand; and that his ordinary expenses amount to ten thousand; it must appear evident, that in such a case there can remain but ten thousand to be applied towards the payment of his debts, and that of course the expectations of the Soucars must be limited to this sum.

In such a case as this, there certainly could be no objection to the Company's obliging the Zemindar to appropriate this sum for the discharge of his debts; nor could there be any danger in their charging themselves with the receipt of it, and accounting annually for the amount to the Soucars: and as this would be securing to them the effectual interposition of the Company's authority for the recovery of their debts, it would seem that the opportunity of such an indulgence would be most fortunate for urging the necessity of lowering the rate of interest; and particularly as, from the statement just given, it might be made evident, that, without such reduction, the Zemindars who are most involved could never be relieved, as the premium of 20 per cent. would absorb the whole sum which could in reason be appropriated.

It would be expecting too much, to imagine, however reasonable this may appear, that the Soucars would immediately come into the views

views of the Company. It may however be hoped, that some amongst them might be induced to accede to them; and that, by a proper improvement of every favorable opportunity, they may all, in the course of time, be engaged to adopt a measure, grounded so evidently upon the public and general benefit, and ultimately providing for the entire discharge of their debts. As a further inducement, they might be assured, that in proportion as the improvements in the country should, upon the renewal of leases, enable the Company to increase their revenue, in the same proportion would they interest themselves to have the payments increased for the discharge of their debts.

It may possibly be objected to this method of accommodation, that the Soucars do not merit the protection and support it proposes to give them; and that their agency having been ruinous to the Zemindars, the sooner and the more severely they can be restrained in their exactions, the sooner the Company may hope to see industry extend itself.

BUT before an objection of this kind should be admitted, it would seem necessary to enquire, whether the rate of interest required by the Soucars, should be imputed to a spirit of usury in them; or whether it should not more properly be charged to the peculiar circumstances of the times, which, by rendering the recovery of property precarious, might have made it but a reasonable compensation. At least, if it may be permitted to apply the experience of other times, and other countries, to this subject, it would not be difficult to prove, that the insecurity of property, whether occasioned by want of confidence in the government, or its inability to protect, has always produced a similar increase in the premium upon money; and that the return of good order and equitable administration have always proved sufficient to remedy the evil.

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And so it would certainly happen in these provinces, if the authority of government should be made but gently to interpose, and an unprejudiced conduct be observed towards the Soucars. If unhappily a different line should be pursued, and the power of the Company should be directed suddenly to compel the Soucars into any method of arrangement less favourable to their interest, the public credit could not fail to be wounded, and the views of the Company to be counteracted in every part of India; for the influence of the Soucars has extended itself to every Durbar; and their agency has been as much encouraged, because it has been found as necessary by Hyder Aly, the Soubah, and the Marattas, as it has been seen to have been in the provinces under Mazulipatam, and as it was experienced in the family of the Seets in Bengal.

Every improvement which should by these means be made in the situation of the Zemindars, could not fail to produce some amendment in the condition of the husbandmen. But the aid of such accidental benefits would never bring forth those exertions of industry, which arise from security, and the certainty of enjoyment. The husbandmen would still be at a great distance from the happy state, in which the wisdom of the Gentoo administration had placed their ancestors; and until some prospect could be shewn them of returning to their ancient establishment, it is to be apprehended their labours would be restrained by diffidence and distrust.

A VARIETY of regulations might be proposed, which would seem to promise them every security, and to preclude every interference of the Zemindars beyond the necessary business of collecting their rents. But regulations are seldom found sufficient to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, or to counteract the habits of established usage. The mind, long accustomed to submission, has not strength enough to assert the rights to which new regulations may call it; nor

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can the haughty tone of authority be immediately softened into the mild expression of justice.

SOME expedient should therefore be thought of, which, without seeming to look beyond the immediate relief of the husbandmen, might tend to inspire them with confidence; and to revive that independence of spirit, which alone can secure to them the benefit of new regulations; and possibly this expedient might be found in the very distresses it is proposed to relieve.

It is a fact well ascertained, that the embarrassments of the husbandmen reduce them for the most part to the necessity of borrowing money; and that the lowness of their credit obliges some of them to take it at an extravagant interest, while even the most responsible are glad to receive it at 24 per cent. and all under the security of a mortgage upon the small share they are allowed in the produce of their labour.

MIGHT not the treasury of the Company, upon the same security of a mortgage, be made to furnish the small necessary aids which the husbandmen might have occasion for? And would not the mortgages they might receive from them supply the best materials for judging of their situation, and afford the most unquestionable evidence of the necessity for occasionally interposing the authority of government in their behalf? Would not interpositions of this nature inspire the husbandmen with confidence, and in the simplest way establish those principles of justice and right, which courts of law might afterwards extend and sustain?

THE detail of such a business would appear to be its only objection; but this will probably be found of little weight, when it is recollected, that

that the chain of connexion established by the Gentoo government, from the village register to the register of the province, is still kept up; and that the salaries which were drawn, by a commission upon the produce of each division, are still received and appropriated by those who inherit those offices by grant of succession, and who in consequence are bound to whatever duties the business of the revenue may require from them in their several departments.

MAY it not be hoped, that the objection to detail would vanish, when it is seen, that through the agency of these established officers, and with the simple operation of government's advancing to the provincial registers the necessary sums, the proposed aid might be administered to the poorest husbandmen? For the particular wants of each individual being known to the registers of the villages, and reported by them to the registers of the districts, and these being again collected together in their reports, every necessary information would be conveyed to the provincial officers; and as all advances from the treasury would be made to them, then receipts would necessarily attach responsibility to them in the first instance, and from them to the subordinate officers, until the mortgage of the husbandman's property should ultimately establish a security; and until, upon the sale of that property, the money should be recovered, and made to flow back to the treasury through the same channels.

It would be an injury to the justice of government, to suppose that any arguments of immediate profit could be necessary to recommend a measure, which has evidently the general benefit for it's object. It may not however be improper to observe, that this end might in some measure be disappointed by an excess of liberality; as the sudden transition from a wasting interest to a total exemption from it, might, by the too rapid introduction of plenty, check the spirit of industry.

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To prevent this, and to keep a reserve for further indulgence, where the peculiarity of situation might make it necessary, it would be prudent to charge these loans with a moderate interest; and in a country where credit is seldom necessary beyond the harvest, or six months at the most, the rate established by Parliament might be made the standard; always however excepting from this charge such debts as should appear to be contracted for the purchase of seed grain, or for buying such implements of husbandry, as might be necessary for cultivating to advantage the grounds already under tillage: debts of this kind being evidently of necessity, and incurred to preserve the inheritance of the family; which being held upon the tenure of constant cultivation, would become subject to forfeiture without the assistance of such aids.

THE husbandmen relieved by these means from the weight of a consuming interest, and encouraged to regard the Company as their guardians and protectors, would soon become sensible of the improved security of their situation, and no longer apprehensive of the exactions of the Zemindars; who indeed would no longer have an interest, or an excuse for oppressing them; every exertion of their industry would be called forth, and grounds, which for ages have been untilled, would be brought into cultivation.

To secure the permanency of these advantages, the care of government should be extended to provide against the dreadful accidents of droughts, which sometimes happen in every part of India, and which never fail to bring on all the miseries of famine. Without the aid of such assistance, the spirit of industry would at times be exerted in vain; and the endeavours of the husbandmen, instead of being rewarded with plenty, would, in such events, be productive of want and distress, from the loss of their labour and their seeds. Happily the means of providing against so dreadful a misfortune in these provinces are within
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the power of government, and may be attained without any considerable expence, and with the advantage of occasioning a great increase in their cultivations and productions.

THE two greatest rivers, which are on this coast of the peninsula, flow through these provinces; the Kistnah to the south, and the Guadavery on the north; their courses being distant about 130 miles from each other, in the places where they approach the nearest. The country which lies between them in this direction has a natural fall on each side, until it at length forms itself into a low flat, which, for the space of about 47 miles, is at a particular season of the year covered with water.

THE vast extent of this natural reservoir, situated so happily, almost midway between these rivers, and capable of containing more water than all the country between it and the sea could require, would seem to promise an inexhaustible source of plenty to those provinces, if the necessary supplies could be thrown into it; and even to point out a way, by which the easiest and most expeditious communication might be opened between the Guadavery and the Kistnah.

THE idea of forming a communication between these rivers by means of this flat, which is distinguished by the name of the Colere Lake, most probably occurred to the Gentoos; as a channel is still open, but with few interruptions, from the northern end of this lake to the Guadavery, which appears to have been the work of art; and as the remains of a like design are still discoverable for many miles on the side of the Kistnah.

BUT whether these channels owed their form and direction to the policy of former governments, or to the natural inclination of the country,

country, and the violence of inundations; in either case, they seem to point out a way, by which the necessary aids of water might be procured; and to invite government to perfect a communication, the advantages of which would be immediate, and which might in time be made of importance to the trade and security of these provinces.

For bounded as they are on the north-east by the sea, and nearly enclosed to the north-west by the Guadavery, and on the south by the Kistnah, they would seem to want only the advantage of this channel, to be secured against the sudden irruptions of cavalry; and to be prepared for yielding those mutual aids, which their situation, and the nature of their productions, so particularly point out; for which the country in the neighbourhood of the Guadavery, the soil of which is peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of rice, is most favoured, by the heavy and continued fall of the monsoon rains. The lands on either side of the Kistnah lying high, and being fit only for the culture of dry grain, yield the most plentiful harvests, when the seasons are most moderate: so that it rarely happens but that one of these provinces possesses the means of influencing the price of the necessaries of life in the other.

THE want of water-communication has however hitherto prevented the inhabitants from receiving any material benefit from these advantages of their situation; nor can they ever be made to receive them effectually, unless assisted by a canal to open this communication: for, denied a constant intercourse by sea, from the violence with which the monsoon winds blow for several months of the year, supplies must for the most part be sent by land; and the expense of this, in a country where the only conveyance is upon the backs of bullocks, and where the imposts of the road are very high, must necessarily enhance the prices so much as to amount almost to a prohibition.

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THE expense of opening a channel of such extent, with the distant prospect of the advantages to be derived from it, will necessarily occur as objections to this undertaking. It is hoped however that they will not appear of such weight, as totally to discourage from the attempt; but that at least a survey will be ordered, to estimate the expense, and to form a computation of the time within which the work might be completed. In the meanwhile, as it cannot mislead, it may not be unsatisfactory to be informed, that from a measurement of the levels and distances taken with some accuracy, there is reason to believe, that neither the expense nor the labour will be found of the extent they may at first appear.

BUT whatever may be the result of a survey, and with whatever diffidence the proposal for forming a navigable canal is here submitted, the smaller work of opening a sufficient course for the water to flow from the Kistnah and the Guadavery into the Colere, is recommended with all the confidence, that a certain conviction of it's general and great utility, and of the small expense at which it might be effected, can inspire.

THE annexed sketch of the country lying between these rivers, will but shew the extent to which the advantages of these supplies might be carried; for all the lands between the sea and these channels may be assisted from them. It will shew too amongst what a number the trifling expense of this work will be shared; for, by the established usage of the country, each land-holder is obliged to contribute two and a half per cent. from the produce of such lands as are watered from any new canal or reservoir, until the expense of forming it has been discharged.

THE only objection which it would seem could be opposed to this measure, is the danger that it might draw off the labouring people too much from the business of cultivation; an objection which would certainly have great weight, if a peculiar institution of the Gentoos had not removed the difficulty, by separating from all other orders of the society those people who are employed in the digging of canals. This class of people, distinguished in India by a name expressive of their occupation, (tank diggers) have no fixed residence; but wander about with their families in search of business, and encamp round the place of their work, until it is finished. Instead therefore of apprehending any temporary neglect of cultivation, from the opening of these channels, and forming the proposed communication, the husbandmen would rather have a new incitement to industry, from the increased consumption which these tank diggers would occasion.

It may too be some further recommendation of the measure, to know, that from the great numbers, and the peculiar robustness of the people who compose this society, a work of this kind might be completed in India in a very short time. For the tank diggers, dispersed throughout a country, which has every-where occasion for their assistance, are easily collected in whatever numbers may be necessary; and their work being paid for by measurement, is executed with an expedition, which Europeans could not surpass, even in the temperate climate of their own country.

It will not be deemed impertinent to digress here for a moment, to offer the tribute of acknowledgment to a people, whose institutions have been seen to furnish resources whenever they were necessary; and whose simplicity of manners has enabled them to preserve, and to support regulations, which distinguish them from all other people, but still more peculiarly distinguish each class of their society from the other; separating

paring, without causing either divisions or dissensions amongst them.

To this peculiarity in the institutions of the Gentoos, is to be attributed the remains of industry which are still to be found throughout India; and which, under every revolution, has enabled the manufacturer to continue his work; changing only his situation, as his security, the means of subsistence, and the demand for his labour, have made it necessary. From hence too it has proceeded, that, at different periods, commerce has flourished in different parts of India; at one time shewing itself at Mazulipatam, where, for above a century, it diffused riches and plenty; still earlier, and more particularly, discovering itself at Surat, where it is now said to be on the decline; but always uniformly increasing and extending itself in the neighbourhood of the European establishments; because there the demand has been found to be uniform; the payment is known to be certain; and because there the manufacturer receives a protection, which ensures to him the profits of his labour.

It were to be wished, that still greater encouragement were given to them; and that possessed, as we now are, of the countries where the manufactures for the consumption of Europe are in greatest abundance and perfection, the policy of our administration were directed towards improving the condition of the manufacturers; and that by attaching them to our government, we might secure to ourselves a preference in their labours, until the full extent of our demand should be compleated; and until our rivals, without the pretence of complaint, should be made to yield to us that superiority in the commerce with India, which our dominion, and the lenity of our government, entitle us to look for.

It would indeed be impossible to say, to what a length these advantages might extend the interest of the Company; or how much their investments might be varied, as well as increased, by their encouragement of the manufacturers.

Those who have had opportunities of comparing the texture of the goods provided for Europe, with those fabricated by the natives for their own consumption, must know, that the qualities of our calicoes, the lengths and breadths to which they are woven, and the denominations by which they are distinguished, differ as much from those manufactured for the natives, as the uses do for which they are designed; and though it would be of little consequence to enquire at what time this innovation took place, yet it appears of importance to remark it here; because as means were heretofore found to detach the weavers from the work to which they had been accustomed, and to engage them in these new manufactures, it seems not a forced inference to conclude, that the same success might now be expected to follow every encouragement that should be given them.

AND as professions are entailed amongst the Gentoos, and every male descendant is born under the obligation of confining himself to the occupation of his father, and of chusing his wife from a family of the same profession; it cannot be doubted, but that where manufacturers are so numerous, our investments might be compleated, even though the orders should exceed all former exports from India to Europe; and that still sufficient encouragement might be left for other Europeans to continue in this trade.

It would be presuming too much, to suppose it were possible here to prescribe the particular modes which should be adopted, for stimulating the industry of the manufacturers who now work for the Company;

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or for encouraging those in the adjoining countries to transport themselves, their families, and their looms, to the neighbourhood of our settlements: for there are circumstances which must ever be regulated, because they will ever be influenced by, characters and situations, and because they must vary with the views and caprices of men.

THERE are however some general lines of encouragement, which will hardly admit of exception; and the first of these, for a manufacturing people, would seem to be, the certainty of procuring at all times the necessaries of life at moderate prices.

To secure to them this advantage, public granaries might be established; under such regulations, as would necessarily influence the rates of the market; and in such abundance, as might enable the government to open the public stores, whenever the prices should exceed the easy subsistence of the poorer working people.

It would probably be impossible to propose any mode of encouragement, which would operate with equal efficacy to this amongst all ranks of people; and particularly with the weaving manufacturers; for no class in India more rigidly abstain from the use of animal food. But as professional immunities are ever found to influence the success of new undertakings, it might be politic to exempt for a time those weavers, who should engage in the manufactures of the Company, from the quit-rent with which they are now every-where charged, for the privilege of establishing and working their looms.

SOME assistance too might be given to them in the provision of the cotton-thread, of which their manufactures are composed, and which they now purchase at a great disadvantage. For this thread being an article of trade, and brought from a great distance, its price must ne-

cessarily be enhanced in every stage of it's passage, from the first purchaser, until it at length falls into the hands of the weaver, at the heavy advance of a retail sale.

It will hardly be credited, that in the small extent of the Company's dominion, this thread, like every other article of trade, is subjected to the payment of a heavy duty to every Zemindar and renter, through whose country it passes; and that commerce meeting with the same demands and discouragement in every part of the peninsula, is now confined to articles of necessity; or carried on under the protection of great names, which exempt it from the payment of duties.

PARTIAL and insufficient as this remedy must be, it cannot but be thought fortunate, that any circumstance should have happened to yield the merchant relief, under the heavy pressure of such impositions; and it is a satisfaction to know, that as the income to the Zemindars from these duties is now rendered inconsiderable, by the frequent use of the dustucks through which this exemption is conveyed, the resumption of the privilege, under which the duties are collected, may be effected, without any material diminution of their revenue.

It will however be politick to defer discovering any intention of this kind, until the established security of their property shall have removed every apprehension of distrust from the Zemindars; and until the generous policy of the Company, encouraging them on every side, shall have taught them to submit without reluctance to a reform of such importance to the general interest of the State.

WHENEVER this opportunity shall offer, it will be of infinite consequence to reduce the number of custom-houses, which are now to be met with in almost every village of these provinces; and to free commerce

merce from the complicated detail it is thereby exposed to, by establishing one general duty, the payment of which, in any part of the Company's dominion, shall serve the merchant for a passport into every village of their country.

HAVING already trespassed so much on your patience, it would be presumption to attempt a further intrusion, if it were not justified by the conviction, that all your endeavours to encourage industry and manufactures must prove ineffectual, if measures are not taken to secure the advantages they may confer; if the husbandmen, at a distance from the seat of government, too far to be travelled even for obtaining justice, should be left to feel the weight of oppression without the hope of redress; and if the inhabitants of these countries should still remain without a prospect of ever being adjudged by those laws and usages, which they are taught from their infancy to regard with peculiar veneration, and which are known to differ, in the most essential points, from the laws established in this country.

THE distinction of tribes, which is the first principle in the constitution of the Gentoos, necessarily precludes that indiscriminating justice, which levels all ranks of people in the eye of our law, and which places the peer and the mechanic upon an equality in all public offences; while in India, the Bramin, uniting the dignity of the first order in the society with the sacred function of the priesthood, is allowed privileges and immunities, which no other tribe dare dispute or invade.

THE descent of property, which with us is generally entailed, to give dignity and importance to the elder branch of the family, amongst the Gentoos is directed to go in equal division amongst the males, where division is insisted on. But their laws discourage this so much, and the estab-

blished usage, with the public opinion, so powerfully recommend the union of family, and the common enjoyment of all the acquisitions they may make, that the instances of separation are as rare as they are disreputable.

INNUMERABLE instances, still more forcible, might be quoted, to prove the impossibility of reconciling the spirit of the laws, under which we live, with the institutes of the Gentoos; and as their institutes are blended with their religion, and have been preserved to this time under every revolution that has happened, it cannot be supposed that any other system, however preferable, would now be received by them.

THE question here therefore would seem to be, not whether we shall innovate their constitution, by an attempt to introduce our laws; but under what form their own laws may be administered, with most advantage to the Subject, and with most security to the State: and this, it is hoped, will be found a question of less difficulty than it may at first appear.

It has been already seen, that the greatest part of the lands in these provinces are held by Zemindars; and that Zemindars, from their original institution, were vested with judicial powers in their respective districts. In this light were they seen, when the Company itself, a Zemindar, under the Saned of Jaffier Ally Khan, appointed Mr. Holwell to undertake the duties of that office; and when that gentleman, anxious to acquit himself in a charge, which he found complicated, and of extensive jurisdiction, applied to have associates joined to him in the judicial part of his trust.

In this light too have the Zemindars been hitherto considered in these provinces; and though there is too much reason to apprehend, that judging without associates, and unrestrained by any superintending authority

rity there, decisions have been more marked by partiality and resentment, than by the rules of law, or the principles of justice; yet it would not seem candid to infer from hence, that because the institution has been abused, it must therefore be a bad one: on the contrary, referring again to Mr. Holwell, the institution will appear to have peculiar merit; for it is said, that in the course of four years, while he presided in that office, not a single complaint was preferred against his judgments in criminal cases, and but one appeal was made from his decrees in matters of property.

SEEING therefore that justice has been administered to so much advantage under the authority of a Zemindar, may it not be hoped, that, under proper regulations, the same benefits might, by the same means, be extended throughout these provinces? And that, in their Zemindary Courts, the people might be gratified, in being judged by those laws they so earnestly solicit for; and to which they still ascribe the riches and population, that formerly so particularly distinguished their country from every other part of the world?

It has been an usage amongst the Gentoos, of as great antiquity as their laws, for the Rajahs to form a council, from the most learned of the Bramins, to assist them in the administration of justice, and to pronounce the decisions of the law upon all cases of property or offence. It could not therefore be deemed an innovation, to direct, that in every Zemindary throughout these provinces, a council of this kind should be formed, to consist of any number of Bramins, from ten to three; who should constantly assist the Zemindar in his judicial capacity, and whose opinions should controul them in all matters of law.

A PUBLIC register of the proceedings of these courts, which would seem to be a part of their constitution, from the report of Mr. Holwell,
and

and which is so consonant to the practice of the Gentoos in other cases, would not only tend to restrain the Zemindars and their associates from every abuse of their power; but would enable the government, by comparing the proceedings of the several courts, to judge by what further regulations the course of justice might be assisted; where the rigour of the Gentoo laws might be tempered, without invading their constitution; and, above all, how the use of juries might be introduced; and the natives of these countries be made to feel, under the security of that privilege, the great advantage of living under an English administration.

It may be objected to this, that the translation of proceedings, so voluminous and complicated, would require the assistance of a greater number of agents, than might be found qualified for such an undertaking. But may it not be answered, that this objection is in itself a reason? And that in shewing how imperfect and confined the communication between the natives and the English now is, it marks strongly the necessity of adopting some mode of encouragement, by which the study of our respective languages might be made more general? And what mode could be proposed, more likely to give this encouragement to the natives, than the certainty of being employed?

If, therefore, no other objection should be found to oppose this measure, the one above suggested would not seem difficult to be obviated; and as the establishment of the Zemindars in their lands, under such security as might remove every apprehension, should precede the regulations here proposed, there would be time enough, before that could be effected, for extending the knowledge of our language, and for making the study of the Gentoo more familiar; and if small premiums of encouragement were to be offered to the natives, and rewards of more consequence were to be held out, to excite the application of the Europeans, it cannot be doubted, but that, at the expense of ten or twelve

twelve thousand pounds, you would have in a short time a sufficient number of agents well qualified to translate these proceedings; and whose studies could not fail to throw new lights on the history of a country, and of a people, with which we are yet but imperfectly acquainted.

I beg leave to subscribe myself,

With the greatest respect,

HONOURABLE SIRS,

Your most obedient and

Most humble servant,

George-Street, Hanover-Square,
3d February, 1779.

(Signed) JOHN SULLIVAN.

